

## *Developing a Registry of Telemedicine Providers*

### **Background**

Telemedicine can increase access to health care services, enhance patient outcomes, and decrease health care costs. Telemedicine connects patients and providers at different locations virtually through real-time audio and video technology. Adoption of telemedicine in Maryland is fragmented; in 2012, about 46 percent of acute care hospitals reported using telemedicine, and adoption among physicians was about 10 percent.<sup>1,2</sup> As required by law, the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) reconvened the telemedicine task force (task force) to expand telemedicine adoption in the State.<sup>3</sup> One strategy to facilitate telemedicine penetration is through the implementation of an online registry of telemedicine providers.

### **Telemedicine Provider Registry**

The MHCC is working with the task force and the State-Designated health information exchange (HIE) to explore how a statewide telemedicine provider registry (registry) could be developed, including information to be displayed, process for provider registration, and features that could be offered.<sup>4</sup> The registry could be made available through the State-Designated HIE, which currently provides clinicians with access to patient health information, such as demographics, laboratory results, radiology reports, consult notes, and medication fill history. Making the registry available through the HIE would enable providers to access these various types of information in one location.

A phased implementation approach for the registry is planned, and will enable incremental enhancements over time. Phase 2 of the registry could include a feature to indicate providers' availability in real-time to deliver telemedicine services, and Phase 3 would include capabilities for consumers to access the registry.

### *What Information Would be Included?*

The registry would initially include a self-identified listing of providers who deliver health care services using telemedicine, with the following information:

- Provider name;
- Practice location(s);
- Specialty;
- Insurance plans accepted;
- Types of technology used; and
- Instructions for initiating a telemedicine consultation with the provider.

### *How Could Providers Join?*

Providers who would like to be included in the registry would join through the State-Designated HIE. They would:

- Sign a participation agreement, which serves as a legal document and contains the terms of the relationship with the HIE;
- Complete a credentialing process, which requires submitting a photo identification and licensing information; and
- Submit provider details to populate the registry.

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<sup>1</sup> MHCC *Health Information Technology: An Assessment of Maryland Hospitals*. September 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Board of Physicians licensure data, 2011-2012.

<sup>3</sup> *Telemedicine Task Force – Maryland Health Care Commission*, Senate Bill 776 (Chapter 319) (2013 Regular Session).

<sup>4</sup> The State-Designated HIE is the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP). More information is available at: <http://crisphhealth.org/>.